bases for Myanmar in the vicnity of India; and

(c) whether Government will give serious consideration to acquisition of an aircraft carrier, a particulary in view of the increased Chinese interest in the seas around India and new naval acquisitions by Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) There is a proposal for purchase of an aircraft carrier as a replacement for INS Vikrant which was decommissioned on 31st January, 1997.

(b) The Government is aware that the Chinese have been supporting the Myanmar Armed Forces in the form of Defence supplies, training, maintenance and upgradation of bases.

(c) A number of steps have been taken as counter-measures to the emerging threat scenario as also to catch up with the force levels. In fact, a two pronged approach has been adopted-first to resort to import to meet the immediate requirements, and second to take recourse to indigenous construction for meeting the long term requirements. All developing having a bearing on the security of the country and its assets are kept under constant observation by Government and appropriate counter-measures are initiated from time to time, to maintain defence preparedness.

Modernisation of Armed Forces

39. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of casualties both military and civilian, suffered by the Indian and Pakistan sides during the exchange of fire across the Line of Control during September-October, 1997;

(b) whether Government would accelerate the process of modernisation of the Armed Forces in view of the constant Pakistani threat and the US and UK tilt in favour of Pakistan on Kashmir as also the active support of China to Pakistan in her nuclear and missile development; and

(c) if so, the action begin taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The details of Indian killed (k)/ wounded(w) due to exchange of fire across Indo-Pak LOC are as follows:

Army		BSF		Civilians	
k	w	k	w	k	w
4	29	—	1	23	28

No authentic information can be furnished on casualties to Pakistani troops/civilians. The figures with us are, at best, estimates based on guess work.

(b) and (c) All developments having bearing on India's national security are monitored and necessary measures are taken from time to time to maintain appropriate defenced preparedness to frustrate attempts of misadventure on the part of our adversaries. Within the available resources, state-of-the-art weapons systems and equipment are provided to the Armed Forces to meet perceptible threats from our adversaries.

पाकिस्तानी सैनिकों द्वारा सीमा पार से की जाने वाली गोलाबारी

40. **श्री राघवजी:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1997 के दौरान पाकिस्तानी सेना द्वारा कब-कब भारतीय सीमा का उल्लंघन करते हुए गोलाबारी की गई और इसमें कितने भारतीय नागरिक और सैनिक मारे गए;

(ख) सरकार द्वारा पाकिस्तान की ओर से की जाने वाली भड़काऊ कार्यवाहियों तथा भविष्य में पाकिस्तान को ऐसी कार्यवाही करने से रोकने के लिए क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं; और